

...Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths among adults age 65 and older and a significant threat to their independence?

US Facts

According to Fact Sheets provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control:

- One in three Americans age 65+ fall each year.
- Of those who fall, 20% to 30% suffer moderate to severe injuries that make it hard for them to get around or live independently and increases their chances of early death.
- 1/3 of nursing home admissions are due to falls.
- Approximately 1.9 million older adults are treated in hospital emergency departments for fall-related injuries, and almost 500,000 (about 26%) are subsequently hospitalized.
- The total cost of fall-related injuries for adults aged 65+ is \$80.9 Billion, including more than \$19 Billion in direct medical costs.
- Fractures were over one-third of non-fatal injuries and made up 61% of costs (approximately \$12 Billion).

Kentucky Facts

- In 2010, there were 32,769 visits by Kentuckians age 65 or older to Kentucky hospitals as a result of fall-related injuries. This is greater than the population of all but seven counties in Kentucky.
- In 2008, KY paid 18,455 Medicaid claims involving hip fractures for approximately 2,500 members age 65+. The total amount paid was \$19.7 million or about \$379,000 per week.
- Falls are the leading cause of traumatic brain injury (TBI) among Kentucky residents age 65+.

For data on falls specific to your Kentucky County, visit <http://www.kspan.uky.edu/data.htm> or www.nofalls.org

Five Simple Solutions to Prevent Falls

1. Begin a regular exercise program.

- ✓ Exercise is one of the easiest and most beneficial ways to improve your overall health and one of the most important ways to lower your risk of Falls;
- ✓ Exercise improves your balance and coordination;
- ✓ Exercise makes you stronger and helps you feel better.

2. Have your physician or pharmacist provide a comprehensive review of your medications.

- ✓ Be sure to include all over the counter medications in addition to your prescriptions.

3. Have your vision checked.

- ✓ Have your eyes examined at least once a year.

4. Have your home assessed for hazards that could result in a Fall

- ✓ Remove items that you can trip over;
- ✓ Remove small throw rugs or use double sided tape to keep them from slipping;
- ✓ Keep items that you use often within easy reach without using a step stool;
- ✓ Have grab bars installed in your shower and next to the toilet
- ✓ Use nonslip mats in the bathtub and on the shower floor;
- ✓ Improve the lighting in your home;
- ✓ Have handrails and lighting installed in all staircases;
- ✓ Wear shoes inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.

5. Obtain a bone density scan to determine your risk a fracture

- ✓ Take Vitamin D supplements as determined by your doctor